

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY

UNCLAS LONDON 06028

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV RH UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: OWEN STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF OWEN STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT
ON RHODESIA APRIL 18 AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY.

2. QUOTE

WITH PERMISSION, MR. SPEAKER, I SHALL MAKE A
STATEMENT ON RHODESIA.

THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE AND I MET THE
LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IN DAR ES SALAAM ON 14/15
APRIL. WE ALSO MET PRESIDENT NYERERE. ON 16 APRIL WE
HAD TALKS IN PRETORIA ON NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA WITH THE
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SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND ON 17 APRIL WE MET
THE SIGNATORIES OF THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT.

THE AIM OF THESE MEETINGS WAS TO PREPARE THE GROUND
FOR ROUND-TABLE TALKS TO BRING ABOUT A NEGOTIATED CEASE-
FIRE AND AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT.

I DO NOT WISH TO HIDE FROM THE HOUSE THAT THERE ARE
STILL MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTIES, BOTH OF

WHOM THINK THEY'RE WINNING. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME SIGNS THAT WE COULD WIDEN THE EXISTING AREAS OF AGREEMENT IN TWO IMPORTANT WAYS, BOTH OF THEM CRUCIAL IF WE ARE TO ESTABLISH A NEUTRAL ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, CAPABLE OF HOLDING FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS.

FIRSTLY, THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS NOW CLOSER TO ACCEPTING A ROLE FOR THE UN IN SUPERVISING A PREVIOUSLY NEGOTIATED CEASEFIRE AND IN MONITORING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MILITARY AND POLICE FORCES. THERE IS MORE UNDERSTANDING IN SALISBURY THAT UN INVOLVEMENT GIVES AN ASSURANCE THAT SANCTIONS WOULD BE LIFTED PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE.

SECONDLY, ALL MIGHT NOW AGREE TO A COUNCIL WITH WIDE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE POWERS WHOSE MEMBERS WOULD HOLD MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT SAID THAT, PROVIDED THEIR OTHER DEMANDS (SOME OF WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO US) WERE MET, THEY COULD ACCEPT A COUNCIL PRESIDED OVER BY A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER HOLDING RESERVE EXECUTIVE POWERS OVER DEFENSE AND LAW AND ORDER.

THERE WAS WIDESPREAD RECOGNITION IN ALL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA THAT IF WE AND THE UNITED STATES WERE TO ABANDON THE SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ANGLO-U.S. PROPOSALS, THERE WOULD BE NO ALTERNATIVE TO A BITTER AND BLOODY CONFLICT WITH AN UNCERTAIN OUTCOME AND THE GRAVE DANGER OF IT BECOMING

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INTERNATIONALIZED AND INVOLVING ALL THE COUNTRIES SURROUNDING RHODESIA. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ACCEPTED OUR INVITATION TO ROUND-TABLE TALKS, AND THE SIGNATORIES OF THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. END QUOTE BREWSTER

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